

# The Cruel COOPER of Ratcliff.

## In THREE PARTS.



### PART I.

NEAR Ratcliff-Cross lived a Cooper there  
Who had a virtuous Wife comely and fair;  
He by this prudent Woman had a Son,  
Beside this Youth they Children ne' had none.

Though wife and prudent, yet this cruel Man,  
Did oft-times beat her with a cruel Hand;  
And as he did one Day with Grief of Heart,  
This Youth with Tears took his Mother's Part.

Cries he Father, I'm afraid you will  
With Kicks and Cuffs my tender Mother kill.  
Hearing these Words he then his Son did beat,  
And in the Night turn'd him into the Street.

Saying, if thou comest here any more,  
I'll break thy Bones, and then lock'd the Door;  
In the wide Street this Lad lay all Night,  
And came in i'th' Morning when it was Light.

But when this Man looked and saw his Son,  
In a vast Passion he to him did run;  
And with an Adz knock'd him on the Crown,  
Which laid the Youth along upon the Ground.

Being thus serv'd, in Tears he did lament,  
Then up he got, and out of Doors he went,  
Saying if I should any longer stay  
He in his Wrath he'll take my Life away.

And to prevent what Dangers may ensue  
Father and Mother he bids both adieu;  
And having Knowledge of his Father's Trade,  
Went Cooper's Mate to Turkey it is said.

He liked the Country so well we do find,  
The Ship came back and left the Lad behind;  
He placed himself with a Native to dwell,  
Whose Family loved him very well.

Though young in Years he was grown very tall,  
And of a comely Countenance withal;  
The Native Damfels did him much admire,  
And to enjoy him some had vast Desire.

His Master kept him for his Serving Man,  
And in short Time by Death's destroying Hand;  
His Master happened to tip away,  
Who being dead, the young Man bore the Sway.

His Mistress lov'd him as she did her Life,  
And in short Time was made his lawful Wife;  
She was prodigious Rich we understand,  
And he had many Slaves at his Command.

Now will I leave him for a little while,  
With Providence on him and her to smile,  
And in the next Part some Enquiry make,  
What sort of Life his cruel Sire doth take.

### The Second PART.

Near Ratcliff-Cross he lived Years 'tis known,  
And to his Wife he was a cruel one;  
And in Process of Time Death did them part,  
And 'tis supposed this Man broke her Heart.

After her Death he could not thrive at all,  
Day after Day he down at Heels did fall;  
And by Degrees this Man was brought so low,  
For Debt himself he was afraid to show.

The Bailiffs waited for him Day and Night,  
He knowing of the same, kept out of Sight;  
And to prevent his going to a Goal,  
In a Merchant-man he unto Sea did sail.

Thus he for Debt was forc'd to fly from Home,  
And on the raging Seas where Billows foam,  
To their great Grief this Man and twenty more,  
Were carried Prisoners to the Turkish Shoar.

It happened so as we do understand,  
They were made Slaves unto his Son's Command;  
Full half a Year in Slavery they had been,  
In all which Time his Son he had not seen.

This Cooper he was aged sixty-two,  
Who was the oldest of the whole Ship's Crew;  
Being stiff with Age, his Task could not perform,  
By which he suffer'd many a bitter Storm.

The Task-Master to him was sharp indeed,  
He often whipt him till he made him bleed;  
Upon a Time he lash'd him so one Day,  
He could no longer stand, but down he lay.

Being laid down, the Task-Master did go,  
And gave the Head Master this to know;  
Crying, Sir, your Slave an aged Man,  
Will not perform his Task do all I can.

He tells me plainly that his Work is done,  
When hearing this the Head Master his Son,  
Went out among the Slaves, where he found,  
His aged Father lying on the Ground.

Not knowing him with great Severity  
He lash'd his Father very grievously;  
Which made him cry, Oh! Sir, my Flesh is sore,  
Do hold thy Hand, and strike me no more.

The Task is hard your Servants put on me,  
What I can do, to that I am most free;  
To suffer thus I am not able to live,  
Kill me out-right, and I will you forgive.

Hearing these Words, his Son did him view,  
And said tell me what Countryman are you?  
His Answer was, I came from Old-England,  
I was a Cooper, Sir, from fair London.

My Name is Robert Stark, 'tis known right well,  
I was a Man in great Repute did dwell;  
But as it prov'd Fortune did frown on me,  
Now 'tis my Lot your suffering Slave to be.

Have you no Family? He answer'd, no,  
I buried a Wife seven Years ago;  
And I had a Son, a hopeful Child was he,  
Three Years before her Death he went from me.

I have not heard from him now all this while,  
I was both cruel to my Wife and Child;  
And I do really think now from my Heart,  
'Tis for my Cruelty I thus do smart.

Now hearing this his Son with Grief was fill'd,  
And Tears like Water that was finely still'd,  
Run down his Cheeks again, Tear after Tear,  
To think that he had lash'd his Father dear.

Then he said his Task-Master did call,  
And said do not abuse this Man at all:  
He is my Father, but don't let him know,  
I am his Son. Then he Home did go.

### The Third PART.

And to his Closet he in private went,  
Where he with bitter Cries did sore lament:  
At length by Chance his Wife did him hear,  
Who said what makes you to grieve my Dear?

His Answer was to grieve great Cause I have,  
For my own Father is become my Slave:  
Not knowing him, I lash'd him o'er and o'er,  
To think of this grieveth me very sore.

To think the Curse of God should light on me,  
But what I did it was in innocency:  
O Wife, what shall I do? my Heart doth bleed,  
Do let my Father come to me with Speed.

They sent for him, and when he came thero,  
They of his tender Flesh did take great Care:  
His bleeding Wounds annointed were with Oil,  
And the poor Man stood trembling all the while.

This being done, choice Linnen fine and soft,  
And other costly Things to him were brought:

And when he in these Garments was array'd,  
He then with Tears lift up his Eyes and said:

Lord, what am I more than another Slave,  
That I such Favour of my Master have:  
Blest be his Name that thus my Friend doth stand,  
To pity me thus in a Foreign Land.

Hearing these Words, his Son could not detain  
His Tears from falling, and to drop again;  
He said the Man who for you thus hath done,  
Behold he is your dear and only Son.

I'm griev'd to think that I prov'd so severe,  
To lay my Hands upon my Father dear;  
But God I hope will pardon me because  
I did not know that you my Father was.

Hearing these Words, like one struck in Amaze,  
He with a Blush then on his Son did gaze:  
Saying, you are my Son, alas! alas!  
By this we see what God can bring to pass.

My Son, my Son, I'm glad thy Face to see,  
But what Astonishment is here for me?  
That I who beat my Child quite out of Door,  
Should thus be forc'd his Favour to implore.

Father, the Lord he did did these Things foresee,  
That you should come your Child's Slave to be;  
And God was pleas'd these Things to do by you,  
To shew what he can bring proud Mortals to.

The Lord has plac'd me here to live and reign,  
To be a Friend to ease thee of thy Pain;  
I'll succour thee whilst Death, and for thy Sake,  
I of my Native Slaves great Care will take.

He cherish'd him oft Times, but on a Day,  
His Wife was pleas'd then these Words to say:  
Husband, because he cruel was to you,  
I ne'er shall love your Father that is true.

I do not care that he should here remain,  
From whence he came let him return again;  
And unto him we will some Riches give,  
Enough to cherish him whilst he doth live.

For Quietness Sake he made her this Reply,  
But turn'd him round, and wept most bitterly  
To think that he must with his Father part,  
Grief like a Spear struck him unto the Heart.

Then in short Time his Father left the Shore,  
And in a Merchant Ship he did come o'er  
Again to England, and did bring to town,  
As much in Riches as five Thousand Pounds.

He ow'd an Hundred Pounds which he paid,  
When being out of Debt, these Words he said:  
First my dear God I will give Thanks to thee,  
Next for my Child my Prayers shall be.

For had it been as I deserv'd  
In Slavery, till Death, I had him serv'd;  
And ne'er had met one in that distant Place  
Thus to commiserate my wretched Case.

Now to conclude, young Men let these Lines,  
Be well engraven in your Hearts and Minds;  
That is, to serve the Lord, and shun the Devil,  
And like this young Man still do Good for Evil.

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